The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ
(Article)

"He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' "
Luke 24:6–7 (BSB)

Introduction:

The above Bible verse tells us about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as He Himself had foretold. As recorded in the Gospels, the 'third day' (what we call 'Easter Day') after His crucifixion, death and burial is the day the event of the resurrection takes place, as Jesus Christ is raised from the dead by God the Father. (1) The resurrection is already mentioned in the Old Testament (Job 14:14; 19:25; Isaiah 25:8; Daniel 12:2; Hosea 13:14 and King David's Psalm, that is Psalm 16:8-11). (2) Having witnessed the resurrection and ascension, the Apostle Peter refers to the same Davidic Psalm at Pentecost (Acts 2:25-28) after the Holy Spirit has arrived.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ as an indication that He is both the Christ (the Messiah and Lord in Acts 2:36), is God's revelation of Jesus' atoning sacrifice for the sins of all believers and God's assurance for all Christians, that they too, will be resurrected and glorified as God's people (1 Corinthians 15:20-28) on Judgment Day (Christ's Second Coming). (3) While the Gospels provide different accounts of the events about the resurrection (Matthew 28, Mark 15; Luke 24 and John 20-21) and it is challenging to harmonize an exact sequence of events (4), all accounts attest to the resurrection as fact - Jesus was crucified, died, buried and now is seen alive. (5) Christ's ascension is revealed in Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:3-8.

This unique and most important event in the history of mankind, must not be taken lightly, since ultimately, it means the difference of every person's eternal destiny - being in heaven with Christ as believer, or being in hell without Christ forever (John 3:16-21). The following provides a commentary on both events, that is Christ's resurrection and ascension as recorded in the Gospels, considering the theological implications of both events.

The Women Visit the Tomb

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,” she said, “and we do not know where they have put Him!”
John 20:1–2 (BSB)

Commentary:

In this passage, we learn about Mary Magdalene, a follower of Jesus, coming to His tomb before dawn, only to find that the stone in front of the entrance has been removed (v.1). This prompts her to run to the Apostles Peter and John telling them that apparently Jesus’ body has been removed (v.2). Here we can see how the Gospel accounts record different and unique, yet not contradictory, details about Christ’s resurrection. (6) At this point in the sequence of events, Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb first, being part of a group of women coming to the tomb (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-3; Luke 24:1) - and two angels, one acting as spokesman, announces the resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:2-7; Mark 16:4-7; Luke 24:2-7). (7) The women then leave the garden tomb, with Mary Magdalene running ahead of the other women (8) to tell both Peter and the “disciple, the one whom Jesus loved” (that is the Apostle John) about the situation (v.2). (9) Similar to the announcement of Jesus’ conception (Matthew 1:20-24; Luke 2:1-7) and His birth (Luke 2:8-20) angels serve as God’s divine messengers to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Peter and John at the Empty Tomb

Then Peter and the other disciple set out for the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down and looked in at the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Simon Peter arrived just after him. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. The cloth that had been around Jesus' head was rolled up, lying separate from the linen cloths. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in. And he saw and believed. For they still did not understand from the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.
John 20:3–10 (BSB)

Commentary:

In this segment, we have Peter and John arrive at the empty tomb of Christ, whereby both see the same empty tomb, and yet have two different responses (v.6 and v.8). The fact that the grave clothes of Jesus are still in the tomb makes it improbable that grave robbers had stolen the Lord's body, and yet left the valuable garment behind. While v.9 reminds us that the two disciples at that point did not understand the fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture (possibly Psalms 16:10; Isaiah 53:10-12; Hosea 6:2) this does not account for their different dispositions of faith. (10) It is the disciple John, upon seeing the empty tomb and the garments, who is the first to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. (11)

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent down to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and the other at the feet. "Woman, why are you weeping?" they asked. "Because they have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I do not know where they have put Him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there; but she did not recognize that it was Jesus. "Woman, why are you weeping?" Jesus

asked. “Whom are you seeking?” Thinking He was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried Him off, tell me where you have put Him, and I will get Him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”). “Do not cling to Me,” Jesus said, “for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go and tell My brothers, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.’ ” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them what He had said to her.
John 20:11–18 (BSB)

Commentary:

After the two disciples have gone home, the resurrected Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene making her the first eyewitness to the risen Christ. This event, as we see in the above passage, occurs in several steps. First, Mary sees two angels as she looks inside the tomb as she weeps, and they ask her why she is weeping (v.12-13). Second, Mary sees Jesus, but does not recognize Him, presuming He is the gardener (v.15). Third, when Jesus utters her name (v.16), she immediately recognizes Him. (12) Since Jesus is the Good Shepherd, she recognizes his voice, because she is one of His sheep (John 10:3-4, 14, 16, 27). (13)

In v.17 Jesus tells Mary not to cling to Him, since He has not ascended yet, and therefore has not yet sent the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete). (14) Instead, Mary is called to testify and witness to Jesus as risen Lord (v.18) which she does, by announcing her encounter to the disciples. (15)

Jesus Appears to the Other Women

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” They came to Him, grasped His feet, and worshiped Him. “Do not be afraid,” said Jesus. “Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see Me.”
Matthew 28:9–10 (BSB)

Commentary:

In this passage Jesus appears to the other women, who respond to Him in a similar way like Mary Magdalene (v.9) and Jesus gives them specific instructions, while at the same time comforting them and telling them not to be afraid (v.10). Important here is that Jesus is referring to His disciples as

“brothers” (v.10) which is a conformation that He has restored the disciples, as they are identified as members of the true family of Jesus (Matthew 12:50). (16) What stands out is that Jesus seeks out all that are His, that is all who believe in Him - so just as Christ had revealed Himself to Mary Magdalene - He does the same for the remaining women who went to the tomb, commissioning them to be His witnesses. (17)

The Report of the Guards

While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. And after the chief priests had met with the elders and formed a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money and instructed them: “You are to say, ‘His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.’ If this report reaches the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So the guards took the money and did as they were instructed. And this account has been circulated among the Jews to this very day.
Matthew 28:11–15 (BSB)

Commentary:

After the initial events surrounding the angel of the Lord descending from heaven to roll away the stone in front of Jesus’ tomb, and the subsequent fear and unconsciousness of the people guarding the tomb (Matthew 28:2-4), these same Roman guards report what happened to the Jewish chief priests (v.11). This segment points to the authenticity of the resurrection, in that even though there is no description of how Jesus was actually raised from the dead, the fainting of the Roman guards, their recovery and initial attempt of some to report to the chief priests, instead of their superior - the Roman governor, Pilate - is plausible, since they would have faced the death penalty under Roman law for failing their duty. (18)

Along with their bribe of the soldiers, their instructions given, that the disciples came and stole the body while they were sleeping (v.13) still leaves the guards open to punishment by their superior. (19) The contrast between Jesus, whose every word is truth, and the deceitfulness of the religious leaders stands out here, since they continue in their evil schemes,

attempting to cover up the resurrection by means of lies and bribes. (20) As such, the earliest attempts of trying to explain the resurrection away, fails, as we see here. (21) All the Jewish leaders would have to do, was to produce the body of Christ as evidence that He had not risen: They could not.

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

That same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. And as they talked and deliberated, Jesus Himself came up and walked along with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. He asked them, ***"What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?"*** They stood still, with sadness on their faces. One of them, named Cleopas, asked Him, "Are You the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in recent days?" ***"What things?"*** He asked. "The events involving Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "This man was a prophet, powerful in speech and action before God and all the people. Our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and they crucified Him. But we were hoping He was the One who would redeem Israel. And besides all this, it is the third day since these things took place. Furthermore, some of our women astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, but they did not find His body. They came and told us they had seen a vision of angels, who said that Jesus was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had described. But Him they did not see." Then Jesus said to them, ***"O foolish ones, how slow are your hearts to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then to enter His glory?"*** And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was written in all the Scriptures about Himself. As they approached the village where they were headed, He seemed to be going farther. But they pleaded with Him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So He went in to stay with them. While He was reclining at the table with them, He took bread, spoke a blessing and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes

were opened and they recognized Jesus—and He disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us as He spoke with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, gathered together and saying, “The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon!” Then the two told what had happened on the road, and how they had recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread.
Luke 24:13–35 (BSB)

Commentary:

This passage, unique to the Gospel of Luke, provides us with a summary of the foregoing event of the same day (v.22-24), the first ‘Bible Study’ in the New Testament (v.27) and a culmination of valuable eyewitness testimony, as Jesus reveals Himself to those two disciples having supper together (v.31).

The level of detail is remarkable in this passage, since we learn about the name of one of the disciples (‘Cleopas’) and the distance of their journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus (‘about seven miles’) as part of circumstantial evidence in this account, pointing to the reliability of the testimony of these two individuals, who are outside the inner circle of the eleven disciples. (22)

The sadness and the initial failure of recognizing Jesus as He walks with them, Jesus explaining how the Old Testament Scriptures point to Him as Messiah, along with their later reflection on their feeling of warmth (v.32) and their response to walk back to Jerusalem in the darkness of night to tell the others what had happened (v.33) are not only unusual, but provide a high level of reliability attesting to the truthfulness of this passage - this is then furthered by the fact that Jesus had appeared to Peter (v.33) which adds a second eyewitness testimony. (23) As Jesus explains how all that had happened points back to Scripture being fulfilled (24), Jesus’ in His glorified resurrected body is now able to appear, disappear, and move between different locations without being hindered by space and time. (25)

Jesus Appears to Ten Disciples *Without* Thomas

It was the first day of the week, and that very evening, while the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them. ***“Peace be with you!”*** He said to them. After He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples rejoiced

when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said to them, ***“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so also I am sending you.”*** When He had said this, He breathed on them and said, ***“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”*** Now Thomas called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger where the nails have been, and put my hand into His side, I will never believe.”

John 20:19–25 (BSB)

Commentary:

This passage, possibly part of the same event as described in Luke 24:36-37, shows that Jesus in His resurrected body is now able to move about at will (“the doors locked for fear of the Jews” in v.19) as He reveals Himself to His disciples (without Thomas being there). (26) Christ’s greeting “Peace be with you” (v.19, 21), a common Jewish greeting still in use today, can be seen as a way of revelation (Judges 6:23; Daniel 10:19) and a way of comforting and reconciling His disciples to Himself, since they had deserted Him at the cross, and especially Peter, who had denied Jesus. (27)

In the process of revealing Himself, Jesus makes clear to the disciples that he has a real body, showing His crucifixion wounds (v.20) to prove that He had truly risen. (28) As they rejoice over Him, Jesus then initiates their commissioning “breathing on them” (v.22) announcing the coming of the Holy Spirit (fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2) - this event is a unique, nonrepeatable experience, different from how the Holy Spirit empowers Christians today. (29) The forgiving and retaining sins, points to the unique authority given to the disciples as they encounter belief and unbelief in response to the gospel. (30)

Jesus Appears to the Disciples *With* Thomas

Eight days later, His disciples were once again inside with the doors locked, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then Jesus said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and look at My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas replied, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Jesus performed many other signs in the

presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.
John 20:26–31 (BSB)

Commentary:

In this segment, we encounter the risen Lord Jesus as He manifests Himself again to the disciples, this time including the disciple Thomas. Even though the disciples had told Thomas about their witness to the risen Lord, Thomas insists that this is false (v.25) which Jesus counteracts by revealing Himself to Thomas (and the others again), prompting Thomas to sate “My Lord and My God!” (v.26-28). (31) The confession of Thomas of Jesus as his “Lord” and “God” are expressions often used in the Old Testament referring to Yahweh (Psalms 35:23-24). (32) Jesus then announces the blessing upon those who believe in Him without having seen Him (v.29). This leads to the concluding part of this passage (v.30-31) in which the Apostle John reveals the purpose of his book, which is, that belief in Jesus as the Christ, that is the Son of God, provides eternal life (v.31). (33)

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples at the Sea of Galilee

Later, by the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus again revealed Himself to the disciples. He made Himself known in this way: Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter told them, “I am going fishing.” “We will go with you,” they said. So they went out and got into the boat, but caught nothing that night. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not recognize that it was Jesus. So He called out to them, ***“Children, do you have any fish?”*** “No,” they answered. He told them, ***“Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.”*** So they cast it there, and they were unable to haul it in because of the great number of fish. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he

had removed it) and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came ashore in the boat. They dragged in the net full of fish, for they were not far from land, only about a hundred yards. When they landed, they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus told them, ***“Bring some of the fish you have just caught.”*** So Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many, the net was not torn. ***“Come, have breakfast,”*** Jesus said to them. None of the disciples dared to ask Him, “Who are You?” They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after He was raised from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, ***“Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these?”*** “Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I love You.” Jesus replied, ***“Feed My lambs.”*** Jesus asked a second time, ***“Simon son of John, do you love Me?”*** “Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I love You.” Jesus told him, ***“Shepherd My sheep.”*** Jesus asked a third time, ***“Simon son of John, do you love Me?”*** Peter was deeply hurt that Jesus had asked him a third time, “Do you love Me?” “Lord, You know all things,” he replied. “You know I love You.” Jesus said to him, ***“Feed My sheep. Truly, truly, I tell you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked where you wanted; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”*** Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. And after He had said this, He told him, ***“Follow Me.”*** Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them. He was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper to ask, “Lord, who is going to betray You?” When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus answered, ***“If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you? You follow Me!”*** Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that this disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say that he would not die, but only, “If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you?” This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who has written them down. And we know that his testimony is true. There are many more things that Jesus did. If all of them were written down, I suppose that not even the world itself would have space for the books that would be written.
John 21:1–25 (BSB)

Commentary:

Here, Jesus reveals Himself to His disciples for “the third time” (v.14). While we do not know why Peter wanted to go fishing again, the miracle Jesus performs here, reminding us of the miracle at the time of Peter’s original call (Luke 5:1-11) - and significantly, Jesus initiates a threefold

affirmation of Peter's love, counterbalancing Peter's prior threefold denial. (34)

It is the rehabilitation of Peter that is at the centre of this segment (v.15-23). The threefold command Jesus gives to Peter (v.15-17) is found in the Old Testament, pointing to a good shepherd, who truly cares about his sheep (Ezekiel 34; Jerimiah 3:15; Isaiah 44:28). (35)

In v.18-23 Jesus talks about the fate of Peter and John ('the beloved disciple') and predicts that Peter will die by crucifixion (v.18), whereas John's fate is not specified. (36) Just as we as believers are called to focus on our own personal walk of faith with Jesus, and not compare ourselves with others, so does Jesus admonish Peter to do the same (v.22) by focusing on his own walk with our Lord. (37)

The Gospel ends with an emphasis on the trustworthiness of the Apostle John's testimony (v.24-25). (38) The final statement dealing with the "many more things that Jesus did" (v.25) recalls the Old Testament (Ecclesiastes 12:12) and is consistent with Greco-Roman and Jewish literature at the time. (39)

The Great Commission

Meanwhile, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain Jesus had designated. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, ***"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age."***
Matthew 28:16–20 (BSB)

Commentary:

Just prior to His ascension, the risen Christ, gives instructions commonly known as 'Great Commission.' Here, on a mountain in Galilee, Jesus specifies what He expects His disciples (and us as believers) to do: that is to share and spread the gospel ('good news') all over the world (v.19). (40) The mentioning of 'doubt' in v.17, points to the authenticity of this event at the time, since the resurrection of Jesus would lead people to some level of perplexity (i.e. "is what I am witnessing here truly happening?"). His disciples

can do all this with confidence, since Jesus assures us of His universal authority (v.18) and His promise to be with all believers: “And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (v.20) which is His personal blessing to Christians, as we face persecution and hardship, while fulfilling the Great Commission. (41)

The Ascension

When Jesus had led them out as far as Bethany, He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He left them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, praising God continually in the temple.
Luke 24:50–53 (BSB)

So when they came together, they asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” Jesus replied, ***“It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*** After He had said this, they watched as He was taken up, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”
Acts 1:6–11 (BSB)

Commentary:

The ascension of Jesus as recorded in both Luke and Acts (with more detail), is just as unique and astonishing as the coming of Christ, His resurrection and an important part of Christianity. Occurring forty days after His resurrection, the bodily ascension into heaven of Jesus completes His physical ministry on earth, and yet also initiates another phase in His ministry, in that at Pentecost, Jesus sends the promised Holy Spirit. (42)

Luke records the blessing Jesus bestows upon all His followers (Luke 24:50) which is then continued in Acts 1:9, where Jesus is taken up and hidden by a cloud (Acts 1:9). In Acts 1:10-11, we learn about two angelic beings appearing, reminding the disciples that Jesus will return from heaven

at His Second Coming on Judgment Day, and that in the meantime, there is work to do here on earth - that is, to fulfill the Great Commission.

With Luke writing both Luke and Acts, the resurrection and ascension unify the significance of Chris's exaltation. (43) The cloud which hides Jesus from the disciples' view, points to the presence of God the Father (similar to the events at Jesus' baptism and transfiguration). (44) The event of the ascension is repeatedly alluded to in the New Testament: Peter mentions it (Acts 2:33-34; 3:21), Paul repeatedly refers to it (Acts 13:30-37; Ephesians 4:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16), as does John's revelation (Revelation 1:13; 5:6; 14:14; 19:11-16; 22:1) and it has been part of the Christian church ever since. (45)

Theological Implications of the Resurrection and Ascension

For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If our hope in Christ is for this life alone, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
1 Corinthians 15:16–20 (BSB)

As seen in the foregoing commentary, we have unique records of eyewitness testimony that attest to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Along with the ascension of Christ the resurrection is *the* supreme event in human history. (46) So let us examine here some of the theological implications of both events.

Considering the testimony of the Apostle Paul in the opening passage above, the entire Christian faith rests on the fact of Christ's resurrection. While other religions at times do lay claim to supernatural events, only Christianity holds to the fact of the resurrection, which is open to methods of historical research - so any objective investigation will have to begin with the events of Jesus' ministry, recorded within half a century following His life. (47)

After the so-called ‘Age of Enlightenment’ which often denies even the possibility of miracles from the outset, rational explanations of the resurrection surfaced, which appear in popular culture today, from time to time. (48) Nevertheless, Christianity claims the resurrection of Jesus as definite historical event *and* a dimension that is not open to historical investigation, such as Christ’s Second Coming, since it has not occurred yet. (49) Using a so-called ‘minimal facts approach’ (combining both biblical and extrabiblical evidence), we can identify five facts (50): First, Jesus was crucified and died. Second, Jesus’ disciples believed in His resurrection appearances. Third, the former church persecutor Saul (later becoming the Apostle Paul) underwent a sudden change. Fourth, James, the half-brother of Jesus suddenly changed from skeptic to believer. Five, Jesus’ tomb was empty. Thus, while many other theories about Christ’s resurrection have been put forth, none of them adequately accounts for these five facts. (51)

The witnesses to the resurrection of Christ and the unfolding events as presented in the Gospels point to the historicity of the resurrection - as such, the witnesses include women coming to the tomb that morning, the witnesses to the empty tomb (like John and Peter), the witnesses of the Roman soldiers who feared for their life and fainted, the witnesses hearing angels speak, the witnesses walking on the road to Emmaus, the disciples’ witness in the upper room, other eyewitnesses as recorded by the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 15:5-8) including Jesus’ appearing to more than 500 people at the same time, and many others. (52) (53) Christ’s resurrection appearances at a specific time, place and to specific people are best explained by our Lord’s bodily resurrection - along with the empty tomb and the subsequent solid faith of the disciples, only the fact of the resurrection does justice to the events recorded in the Bible, hence other interpretations and reasons about the resurrection must be rejected. (54)

The resurrection is directly linked to Christ’s ascension in that it is a partial fulfillment of Jesus’ prayer in John 17:5, 24 that His disciples would witness His glory, which will be completed on the day of Christ’s return to judge (Acts 1:11; Hebrews 9:28; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1; Revelation 1:5). (55) As the ascended Christ, He intercedes for all believers at God’s right hand (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14; 6:20; 7:20) as our advocate - providing hope, peace and security for Christians (1 John 2:1). (56)

What then are the theological implications of the resurrection and the ascension of Christ? As we learn from the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 the resurrection of Christ helps us in our walk of faith with Jesus, and keeps us safe as believers from man-made ideas and philosophy. (57) The resurrection is primarily a theology of vindication - First, even though initially Jesus’ death appeared to be God having rejected Him, His resurrection vindicates Him as true Messiah. Second, God raising Christ from the dead vindicates His

teaching and atoning work. Third, Christ's resurrection by God initiates a new era, to be finalized at Jesus' Second Coming, which is the 'already, not yet' that the Apostle Paul alludes to, referring to the resurrected Christ as the "first fruits" of the harvest in the age to come (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23). (58)

It is here that we see the exaltation of Christ in both His resurrection (John 2:19-21 which He Himself promised (59) and His ascension. As risen Lord, we have proof of Christ as divine Son (Acts 13:33; Romans 1:3), Messiah (Acts 2:36; 3:13-15; 5:31), God endorsing Christ as mediator (Acts 2:23-24; Romans 6:4), Christ's exaltation as suffering servant (Luke 24:26; Acts 2:33; Philippians 2:9), Christ guaranteeing our justification and forgiveness (Romans 4:25; Acts 5:31), the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), eternal life (Romans 6:4), and the basis and pledge for our salvation (Acts 4:2; 1 Corinthians 6:14). (60)

Lastly, Christ's resurrection is part of His atonement, following His ascension - that is, Jesus demonstrates his victory over death (Acts 2:24; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57), as Son of God who is now in heaven. (61) The ascension, then, establishes three things: One, the personal ascendancy of Jesus as executive ruler (Matthew 28:18; 1 Peter 3:22); Two, the spiritual omnipresence of Jesus, who is accessible to all Christians (Hebrews 4:14; 4:16; 7:25; 13:6-8); Three, the heavenly ministry of Christ who actively intervenes for all believers (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25) - so, from Christ's throne, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus intercedes for His children on an ongoing basis (Acts 2:33; John 16:7-14) and equips them to serve Him (Ephesians 4:8-12) in order to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). (62)

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have gazed upon and touched with our own hands—this is the Word of life. And this is the life that was revealed; we have seen it and testified to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And this fellowship of ours is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We write these things so that our joy may be complete.
1 John 1:1–4 (BSB)

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we get a better sense of the significance, importance and uniqueness of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Of all

religions and belief systems in the world, Christianity is unique in that it rests upon the resurrection of its divine founder. (63) The testimony of the eyewitnesses to these events are what matters here. While the Apostle John is the first person to believe in Jesus' resurrection (John 28:8) as he sees the empty tomb, it is Mary Magdalene to whom Jesus makes His first resurrection appearance (John 20:11-18). (64)

As Jesus' resurrection is bodily, Mary immediately holds on to Him physically (John 20:17), our Lord encourages her to let go of Him, since He has yet to ascend into heaven to complete His glorification and release the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. (65) With the Apostle John, as first believer in Christ risen, and Mary as first eyewitness and believer to the resurrection, we understand the essence of the opening passage above (written by the Apostle John), which is the testimony to the 'Word of Life' (Jesus) having been revealed, and thereby extending the invitation to believe and follow Jesus Christ to everyone (1 John 1:2-3).

Also, the testimony of others (both to the resurrection and others - only to the events surrounding the resurrection) such as the other women (Matthew 28:9-10) along with the report of the Roman guards, followed by the attempted cover-up by the Jewish leaders (Matthew 28:11-15) adds additional details that bolster the case for Christ risen.

Next, the appearance of Jesus to the two disciples en route to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) links the resurrection to the fulfillment of Old Testament promises, as Jesus conducts the first 'Bible-study,' pointing to Himself as the only One who can provide forgiveness and salvation to anyone with a repentant heart (Luke 24:25-27) - and having revealed Himself to the two by breaking the bread (Luke 24:30-31) and then disappearing, His humanity and simultaneous divinity (being 'God in the Flesh') comes to the forefront. (66) As such, in the Gospel of Luke, the Emmaus' account figures prominently among the gospel resurrection records, in that God's plan in salvation history is fulfilled in and through the risen Christ. (67)

Furthermore, as Jesus appears to the disciples without Thomas (John 20:19-25) and then with Thomas (John 20:26-31), the former event show that Jesus in His resurrected body is not limited by space and time anymore, when the latter event shows that in His glorified and composed body, Jesus causes faith and belief, even in a person who expresses categorical doubt and skepticism, such as Thomas, who as he encounters the risen Lord, confesses Him as both Lord and God (Yahweh). (68)

Likewise, the third appearance of the risen Lord to the disciples (John 21), while fishing on the sea of Galilee, with Jesus performing a miracle as risen Lord, His miracles prior to His death and resurrection are brought back to mind, such as the feeding of the five thousand (Matthew 14:15-21; Mark

6:35-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:6-13) and the initial commissioning of Peter, James and John (Luke 5:1-11). (69) With Jesus restoring Peter back to ministry and calling him to feed His sheep, we have another incident that reveal Jesus as risen Lord. (70)

The call and commissioning of Christ is then recorded as the 'Great Commission' (Matthew 28:16-20). The reference by Jesus to the Trinity ("Father, Son and Holy Spirit" in v.19) affirms the importance of trinitarian doctrine, and just as important is making disciples ("baptizing them" and "teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you") - so, while baptism is an important part of obeying God, it is in no way inferior to the missional dimension Jesus emphasizes here. (71) Having been vindicated in resurrection, Jesus now has the authority to act as God Himself (v.18) as He delegates the Great Commission to the disciples and to all Christians. (72)

The ascension then, marks the end of Jesus' earthly ministry and initiates the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit, who arrives at Pentecost. Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4) is more important than any earthly considerations as to restoration of Israel's kingdom, since God's promise is already found in the Old Testament (Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:27; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29). (73) Jesus' ascension is not a disappearance, but Him going to a 'real place in heaven'; it is also in this way that Christ receives honor and glory as 'God-Man' previously unknown; Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God (aka. 'Christ's Session'). (74) As a consequence of Christ's resurrection and ascension, He will return at His Second Coming as reigning Messiah (Acts 3:20-21). (76) The ascension as risen Lord is an encouragement to all believers, who are indwelt and guided by the Holy Spirit. (77)

In addition, considering the theological implications of the resurrection and ascension, we see that even though there are no authentic accounts of any person in the ancient world who was raised to an eternal existence, let alone any accompanying eyewitness records (78), and even though, especially today, there is a pre-disposition within the Christian church to undervalue or even discount the fact of Christ's resurrection (79), there is no need and no good reason to do so, since there is more than enough credible evidence to establish the resurrection as a fact, making a cumulative case for our Lord's resurrection (80), while still leaving room for faith and belief in Jesus Christ.

With Christianity having at its core the resurrection of Christ as factual space-time event in human history (81), despite unsubstantiated theories that deny the resurrection historically, there are different 'proofs' that point to the truthfulness of the resurrection, such as the 'minimal facts' approach. (82) A complimentary 'proofing' of the fact of the resurrection can be seen in the empty tomb, Christ's grave clothes, His resurrection appearances, the

transformation of the disciples, observing the first day of the week and the existence of the church. (83)

The meaning of the resurrection and ascension, is found primarily in the person of Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus has the power to provide eternal life, He can and will never die again, since death no longer has any power over Him (Romans 6:9, 10), and thus, His resurrection demonstrates His victory over Satan (the devil) who held the power of death (1 Corinthians 15:21; Hebrews 2:14; 2 Timothy 1:10) (84) In line with this, Christ's ascension, is a manifestation of His exaltation by God, until the moment He consummates all things (Acts 3:21). (85)

What matters most is that belief in Jesus and *Jesus only*, is the way to eternal salvation. By contrast, unbelief leads to eternal damnation and separation from Christ in hell. The doctrine of the resurrection (Acts 24:15) is also mentioned by Jesus Himself (John 5:25, 28-29). (86)

Lastly, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, not only validate the entire Bible (Old Testament and New Testament) as true, it reminds us of Jesus' promised return at His Second Coming (Judgment Day), and the bodily resurrection is our guarantee as Christians, that we, too will be raised to eternal life - having been assured of our forgiveness and unbreakable salvation through faith in Jesus (87) Since Christ has reconciled us to God through His atoning sacrifice, verified as risen Savior (88), the call is to believe the gospel (89):

> Therefore, since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from wrath through Him! For if, when we were enemies of God, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life!
>
> Romans 5:9–10 (BSB)

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Appendix A

The Resurrection & Ascension
(Bible Passages - BSB translation)

Matthew

The Resurrection

(Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–9)

28 1After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary
Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

2Suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended
from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat on it. 3His appearance was like
lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4The guards trembled in fear
of him and became like dead men.

5But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are
looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6He is not here; He has risen, just as He
said! Come, see the place where He lay. 7Then go quickly and tell His
disciples, ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee.
There you will see Him.’ See, I have told you.”

8So they hurried away from the tomb in fear and great joy, and ran to tell His
disciples. 9Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” They came to
Him, grasped His feet, and worshiped Him. 10“Do not be afraid,” said Jesus.
“Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see Me.”

The Report of the Guards

11While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city
and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. 12And after the chief
priests had met with the elders and formed a plan, they gave the soldiers a
large sum of money 13and instructed them: “You are to say, ‘His disciples
came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.’ 14If this report
reaches the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.”

15So the guards took the money and did as they were instructed. And this
account has been circulated among the Jews to this very day.

The Great Commission

(Mark 16:14–18)

16 Meanwhile, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain Jesus had
designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some doubted.

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth
has been given to Me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And
surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Mark

The Resurrection

(Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–9)

16 1 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of
James, and Salome bought spices so they could go and anoint the body of
Jesus. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they went to
the tomb. 3 They were asking one another, “Who will roll away the stone from
the entrance of the tomb?” 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the
stone had been rolled away, even though it was extremely large.

5 When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white
robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them,
“Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was
crucified. He has risen! He is not here! See the place where they put Him.
7 But go, tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee.
There you will see Him, just as He told you.’ ”

8 So the women left the tomb and ran away, trembling and bewildered. And in
their fear they did not say a word to anyone.

Luke

The Resurrection

(Matthew 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; John 20:1–9)

24 1On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women
came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. 2They found the
stone rolled away from the tomb, 3but when they entered, they did not find
the body of the Lord Jesus. 4While they were puzzling over this, suddenly two
men in radiant apparel stood beside them.

5As the women bowed their faces to the ground in terror, the two men asked
them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6He is not here; He
has risen! Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee: 7‘The Son
of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and
on the third day rise again.’ ”

8Then they remembered His words. 9And when they returned from the tomb,
they reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. 10It was
Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women
with them who told this to the apostles. 11But their words seemed like
nonsense to them, and they did not believe the women.

12Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. And after bending down and
seeing only the linen cloths, he went away, wondering to himself what had
happened.

The Road to Emmaus

(Mark 16:12–13)

13That same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about
seven miles from Jerusalem. 14They were talking with each other about
everything that had happened. 15And as they talked and deliberated, Jesus
Himself came up and walked along with them. 16But their eyes were kept
from recognizing Him.

17He asked them, “What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They stood still, with sadness on their faces. 18One of them, named Cleopas,
asked Him, “Are You the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the
things that have happened there in recent days?”

19“What things?” He asked.

“The events involving Jesus of Nazareth,” they answered. “This man was a
prophet, powerful in speech and action before God and all the people. 20Our
chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and they
crucified Him. 21But we were hoping He was the One who would redeem
Israel. And besides all this, it is the third day since these things took place.

22 Furthermore, some of our women astounded us. They were at the tomb
early this morning, 23 but they did not find His body. They came and told us
they had seen a vision of angels, who said that Jesus was alive. 24 Then some
of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had
described. But Him they did not see."

25 Then Jesus said to them, "O foolish ones, how slow are your hearts to
believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary for the
Christ to suffer these things and then to enter His glory?" 27 And beginning
with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was written in
all the Scriptures about Himself.

28 As they approached the village where they were headed, He seemed to be
going farther. 29 But they pleaded with Him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly
evening and the day is almost over."

So He went in to stay with them. 30 While He was reclining at the table with
them, He took bread, spoke a blessing and broke it, and gave it to them.
31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus—and He
disappeared from their sight.

32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us as He spoke
with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" 33 And they got up that
very hour and returned to Jerusalem.

There they found the Eleven and those with them, gathered together 34 and
saying, "The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon!"

35 Then the two told what had happened on the road, and how they had
recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

(John 20:19–23; 1 John 1:1–4)

36 While they were describing these events, Jesus Himself stood among them
and said, "Peace be with you." 37 But they were startled and frightened,
thinking they had seen a spirit.

38 "Why are you troubled," Jesus asked, "and why do doubts arise in your
hearts? 39 Look at My hands and My feet. It is I Myself. Touch Me and see—for
a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." 40 And when He
had said this, He showed them His hands and feet.

41 While they were still in disbelief because of their joy and amazement, He
asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" 42 So they gave Him a piece
of broiled fish, 43 and He took it and ate it in front of them.

44 Jesus said to them, “These are the words I spoke to you while I was still
with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of
Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.” 45 Then He opened their minds to
understand the Scriptures.

46 And He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise
from the dead on the third day, 47 and in His name repentance and
forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.
48 You are witnesses of these things.

49 And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you. But remain in
the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascension

(Mark 16:19–20; Acts 1:6–11)

50 When Jesus had led them out as far as Bethany, He lifted up His hands and
blessed them. 51 While He was blessing them, He left them and was carried
up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with
great joy, 53 praising God continually in the temple.

Acts 1:1-11

Acts

Prologue

(Luke 1:1–4)

1 1In my first book, O Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do
and to teach, 2until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving
instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen. 3After His
suffering, He presented Himself to them with many convincing proofs that He
was alive. He appeared to them over a span of forty days and spoke about
the kingdom of God.

4And while they were gathered together, He commanded them: “Do not
leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift the Father promised, which you have
heard Me discuss. 5For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will
be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

The Ascension

(Mark 16:19–20; Luke 24:50–53)

6So when they came together, they asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time
restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7Jesus replied, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has
fixed by His own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit
comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea
and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

9After He had said this, they watched as He was taken up, and a cloud hid
Him from their sight. 10They were looking intently into the sky as He was

going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”

John

The Resurrection

(Matthew 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12)

20 1Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. 2So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,” she said, “and we do not know where they have put Him!”

3Then Peter and the other disciple set out for the tomb. 4The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5He bent down and looked in at the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

6Simon Peter arrived just after him. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. 7The cloth that had been around Jesus’ head was rolled up, lying separate from the linen cloths. 8Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in. And he saw and believed. 9For they still did not understand from the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

(Mark 16:9–11)

10Then the disciples returned to their homes. 11But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent down to look into the tomb, 12and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and the other at the feet.

13“Woman, why are you weeping?” they asked.

“Because they have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I do not know where they have put Him.”

14When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there; but she did not recognize that it was Jesus.

15“Woman, why are you weeping?” Jesus asked. “Whom are you seeking?”

Thinking He was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried Him off, tell me where you have put Him, and I will get Him.”

16Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

17“Do not cling to Me,” Jesus said, “for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go and tell My brothers, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.’ ”

18Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them what He had said to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

(Luke 24:36–49; 1 John 1:1–4)

19It was the first day of the week, and that very evening, while the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them. “Peace be with you!” He said to them. 20After He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side.

The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

21Again Jesus said to them, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so also I am sending you.” 22When He had said this, He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”

Jesus Appears to Thomas

24Now Thomas called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he replied, “Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger where the nails have been, and put my hand into His side, I will never believe.”

26Eight days later, His disciples were once again inside with the doors locked, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”

27Then Jesus said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and look at My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. Stop doubting and believe.”

28 Thomas replied, “My Lord and my God!”

29 Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed
are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Book

30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which
are not written in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have
life in His name.

Jesus Appears by the Sea of Tiberias

21 1 Later, by the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus again revealed Himself to the
disciples. He made Himself known in this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas called
Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two
other disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter told them, “I am going fishing.”

“We will go with you,” they said. So they went out and got into the boat, but
caught nothing that night.

4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not
recognize that it was Jesus. 5 So He called out to them, “Children, do you
have any fish?”

“No,” they answered.

6 He told them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find
some.” So they cast it there, and they were unable to haul it in because of
the great number of fish.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as
Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he
had removed it) and jumped into the sea. 8 The other disciples came ashore
in the boat. They dragged in the net full of fish, for they were not far from
land, only about a hundred yards.

9 When they landed, they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it, and some
bread.

10 Jesus told them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.” 11 So Simon
Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153,
but even with so many, the net was not torn.

12 “Come, have breakfast,” Jesus said to them. None of the disciples dared to
ask Him, “Who are You?” They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took
the bread and gave it to them, and He did the same with the fish.

14 This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after He
was raised from the dead.

Jesus and Peter

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of
John, do you love Me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I love You.”

Jesus replied, “Feed My lambs.”

16 Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I love You.”

Jesus told him, “Shepherd My sheep.”

17 Jesus asked a third time, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?”

Peter was deeply hurt that Jesus had asked him a third time, “Do you love
Me?”

“Lord, You know all things,” he replied. “You know I love You.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.

18 Truly, truly, I tell you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and
walked where you wanted; but when you are old, you will stretch out your
hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want
to go.” 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would
glorify God.

And after He had said this, He told him, “Follow Me.”

Jesus and the Beloved Disciple

20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them. He was
the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper to ask, “Lord, who
is going to betray You?” 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about
him?”

22 Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you?
You follow Me!” 23 Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that

this disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say that he would not die, but only, “If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you?”

24This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who has written them down. And we know that his testimony is true.

25There are many more things that Jesus did. If all of them were written down, I suppose that not even the world itself would have space for the books that would be written.

Appendix B

The Resurrection to The Ascension			Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
AD 30		Vicinity of				
Dawn of the First Day (Sunday, a.k.a. the “Lord’s Day”)	(1)Women come to the tomb	Jerusalem	28:1-8	16:1-8	24:1-11	20:1-2
	(2)Peter and John visit tomb				24:12	20:3-10
	(3)Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene	Jerusalem		16:9-11		20:11-18
	(4)Jesus appears to the other women	Jerusalem	28:9-10			
	(5)Roman guards report of the resurrection		28:11-15			
Sunday	(6)Jesus reveals			16:12-	24:13-	

afternoon	Himself to two disciples en route to Emmaus			13	35	
Late Sunday	(7)Jesus appears to ten disciples without Thomas	Jerusalem			24:36-43	20:19-25
A Week Later	(8)Appearance to the disciples with Thomas				24:44-49	20:26-31
During 40-day-period, before Ascension	(9)Jesus shows Himself to seven disciples by Sea of Galilee	Galilee				21:1-25
	(10)The Great Commission		28:16-20	16:14-18		
	(11)The Ascension	Mount Olivet		16:19-20	24:50-53 Acts 1:3-8	

Appendix C

The Resurrection Appearances of Jesus Christ								
Appearance	Place	Time	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	1 Cor.
At the empty tomb	Jerusalem	Resurrection Sunday	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-9		
To Mary Magdalene at tomb	Jerusalem	Resurrection Sunday		16:9-11		20:11-18		
To other women	Jerusalem	Resurrection Sunday	28:9-10					

To two disciples going to Emmaus	Road to Emmaus	Resurrection Sunday		16:12-13	24:13-32			
To Peter	Jerusalem	Resurrection Sunday			24:34			15:5
To the ten disciples in the upper room	Jerusalem	Resurrection Sunday			24:36-43	20:19-25		
To the eleven disciples in the upper room	Jerusalem	Following Sunday		16:14		20:26-31		15:5
To seven disciples fishing	Sea of Galilee	Some time later				21:1-23		
To the 11 disciples on a mountain	Galilee	Some time later	28:16-20	16:15-18				
To more than 500	Unknown	Some time later						15:6
To James (half-brother of Jesus)	Unknown	Some time later						15:7
To his disciples at his ascension	Mount of Olives	40 days after Jesus' resurrection			24:44-49		1:3-8	
To Paul	Damascus	Several year later					9:1-19; 22:3-16; 26:9-18	9:1

Appendix D

How To Be Saved

(a)

1. All people are under God's wrath, since all of us fail to meet His standard of perfection, because God is absolutely holy (Romans 3:23).
2. The penalty for sin, under which we all are, is death, which is eternal separation from God in hell (Romans 6:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:15).
3. However, since Jesus loves people, He left heaven to come as 'God in the Flesh' to die for the sins of all believers (Romans 5:8; Philippians 2:7).
4. By placing our faith in Jesus Christ alone, as risen Lord, and believing that He is the only One who can save us, Jesus promises us His mercy and grants us eternal life. Good deeds (apart from Christ) cannot earn our salvation. Only by faith in what Christ has already accomplished for us on the cross, are we saved.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus,
I come to You as a broken sinner with a repentant heart.
My sins are many, and I have sinned against You.
I acknowledge that on my own, I cannot earn my salvation.
I believe that You came as 'God in the Flesh' to atone for all my sins.
You did this for me, by dying on the cross, rising three days later,
ascending to heaven and sending the Holy Spirit.
I come to You in humble submission, as Your child, Lord Jesus,
and embrace You as my personal Lord and Savior.
Amen.

(a) Adapted from Habermas, Gary R., and Mike Licona. *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2004., p.246-247.

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May God bless you and keep you.

Pastor John

Amen.